
AN
EXAMINATION
OF AN
ESSAY
ON
Establishments in Religion.

[Price 2 s. 6 d.]

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11. Feb

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E S S A Y
ON
Establishments in Religion.
WITH
R E M A R K S

Upon it, considered as a
DEFENCE of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND;
And as an
ANSWER to the CONFSSIONAL.

By BENJAMIN DAWSON, L.L.D.
Rector of BURGH in SUFFOLK.

*The Christian magistrate must refrain from persecuting any
Religion. Essay on Establ. in Rel.*
Civil Pains and Penalties can in any degree belong to Religion.
Ibid.

L O N D O N.
Printed for J. JOHNSON, No. 8. in Pater-noster Row,
M.DCC.LXVII,

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OF AN
E. S. A. Y.
ON

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Printed by J. B. Nichols, No. 10, N. York St., N. York.

Author, J. B. Nichols, No. 10, N. York St., N. York.

By BENJAMIN BAYLON, LL.D.,
Rector of Boston University.

The City of Boston, 1840.
Printed by J. B. Nichols, No. 10, N. York St., N. York.

10 N. York St., N. York.
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TO

MILES BARNE, *Esq.*

SIR,

I HAD not needed to doubt
your ready Patronage of this
Work for the Sentiments it contains
respecting Civil and Religious Li-
berty, could I have presumed to
think it in its Execution equally de-
serving your Approbation. But as
no Apology can be satisfactorily
made for its Defect herein, so in-
stead of offering any I shall only beg
your

vi D E D I C A T I O N.

your Acceptance of my best Endeavour to do Justice to the Subject, and to render the Work not unworthy your Inspection.

THE Preservation of Our constitution in Church as well as in State is the Object of that Legislative body, of which you, Sir, are a Member. This Constitution, under the good Providence of GOD, gives the Church of *England* a Security and Stability on her Protestant foundations amid the many artful Attempts of her Enemies to undermine them, and continues as a Glory around Her, notwithstanding either the disgraceful Representations
which

DEDICATION. vii

which have proceeded from the Indiscretion of some of her own Members, or those which are daily made, evidently through an Incompetency of Judgement, by some that dissent from Her.

A ZEAL for what is called the Church, keeping out of Sight the True Constitutional principles of the Church of *England*, but too frequently leads her Defenders to an Avowal of Principles which but discredit Her, and to express an unbecoming Distrust of the Wisdom of PARLIAMENT itself, from whose minutest Inspection into the Circumstances

viii D E D I C A T I O N.

stances of the Church for farther Reformation we can have Nothing to fear; and without whose Judgment, and Sanction to Measures projected by any Order of Men independently thereon, we should have no Good to hope.

AND truly, Sir, if the Points in question could justly be considered in another Light, as speculative merely, or Objects of Scholastic debate, I should not have thought of offering a Work of that Kind to your Patronage.

BUT

DEDICATION. is

BUT the Principles examined are of a very different Nature, and have a more serious Aspect. They are such Principles as have exercised the Pens of a CHILLINGWORTH, a LOCKE, and a HOADLEY, to expose and refute; Principles which, however speciously they may be sometimes set off and recommended, under the smooth Profession of being willing to keep all things quiet in the Church, would, if admitted in their utmost Latitude, reduce us to a State little preferable to that out of which, we so justly reckon it the greatest

* D E D I C A T I O N.

greatest Blessing to this Kingdom, to have emerged at the Reformation.

BUT, Sir, I mean not to offer this as a sufficient Justification of the Liberty I have taken to give Respect to my Book by the Inscription of it to You. I have an ample Plea to make for that. — It was my Duty, Sir, to present it in Testimony of a grateful Resentment of the many Obligations which, under a kind and generous Patronage, have been conferred upon me, since as well as during my very agreeable Residence in your Family. Under a lasting Sense of which Obligations
to

D E D I C A T I O N. xi

to You, My worthy Patron, and,
with my hearty Prayer that your
Country may long enjoy the Bene-
fit of your known steady Attach-
ment to and good Discernment of
its Interests,

I remain,

S I R,

Your most Obedient,

*Hackney,
Aug. 1, 1767.*

and most Devoted,

Humble Servant,

Benjamin Dawson..

ERRATUM.

Page 43. line last, read, which those persons used.

AN
EXAMINATION
OF AN
ESSAY
ON

Establiments in Religion.

THE learned author of the *Confes-
sional* hath discussed the question,
relating to established systems of
faith and doctrine in protestant churches,
with so great freedom, as to have alarmed
some zealous advocates for the establish-
ment of the Church of *England*. At the
same time, it is equally discernible that
many others, no less attached to her true
interest, but who judge of that on more

B

Catholic

Catholic principles, apprehend no harm from the discussion. These expect from it honour and advantage to the protestant religion in general, and to that Church in particular, which has it in her power to deserve, in the judgement of all competent observers, the high compliment passed upon Her, of being *The chief and leading branch of that great community, which goes under the denomination of the REFORMED CHURCH* *.

BUT, whether the fears of the former be as justly grounded as the expectations of the latter, or not, certain it is, the Church cannot reasonably hope for any steady support from those who, taking up the pen under an alarm, commit her cause to the uncertain direction of their own bewildering fears and intemperate zeal.

* Dr. MOSHEIM's *Compendious View of Ecclesiastical History*, translated by Dr. MACLAINE, vol. II. p. 575.

They

They bid the fairest to do Her justice and to bring credit to Her, who, after a patient attention to the admonitions of her reprovers, are not more intent on demonstrating that they are unjust or unnecessary, than determined, where they are apparently just and important, to turn them to her farther improvement and excellence.

THE Public have already been shewn, into what great inconsistency the learned Professor RUTHERFORTH has been thrown by his impatience, under this apprehension of danger to the Church, to oppose so capital a performance as the *Confessional*; a Performance, which appears to have wanted neither time, learning, nor sound judgement to bring it to that degree of perfection in which it made its appearance in the world. The like spirit of fear for the Church (and without working Her a more effectual aid in her perilous hour) seems to have possessed the Archdeacon of

St. Alban's, that had seized the Archdeacon of *Essex*. Another Champion succeeds, and enters into their labours, not without declaring what brings him into the field. He owns, that *his view, of the nature and expediency of Establishments in religion*, has been drawn from him by an *alarm*, which he has received from a "late applauded publication *." Alarmed he appears to be for the *safety* itself of the Church of *England*. He fears for her very *existence*; and the reader views him under this terrible consternation, rising up to silence "the powerful battery, which, whether "with intention or not, was levelled," he says, "against our foundations †." What good service may be hoped for; or (to preserve the happy allusion) what execution is likely to be done by this *silencing* battery (though it were in the hands of a more skilful Engineer) which is thus erected and levelled under a confessed panic, may be

* *The Confessional*.

† *Essay*, p. 49.

guessed

guessed at. But, that we may judge with some certainty, let us view and examine his Plan of operations.

AFTER some reflections on the duty of a Christian Magistrate, respecting the exercise of his authority in religion, the consistency of which shall be considered afterwards, we are thus introduced to his Plan of Church-government; or the essential requisites and regulations in a religious Establishment.

“As the Magistrate will not,” it is said,
 “trust to the chance of the people’s in-
 “structing themselves, neither will it be
 “prudent in Him to leave a matter of this
 “moment, to the hazard of some fit per-
 “sons being moved merely by a zeal for the
 “public service, voluntarily to undertake
 “the task of instructing them*.” Into
 whose hands, then, this grand work of Ec-

* *Essay*, p. 25.

clesiastical Legislation should be committed, will appear from the following Epitome of the plan.

“CHRISTIANITY,” it is asserted, “hath set apart an Order of men, and “dedicated them to this very purpose of “public instruction—These the Magistrate “will naturally make use of, and encourage them in their labour, by conferring “upon them temporal benefits and civil “advantages * —This is no more than an “act of Justice — They are Labourers “of the State, and *ought* by the State to be “provided for †. — The Church (so the “dedicated Order is termed) thus acting “under the protection of the Magistrate, “will set on foot all the most effectual Methods of instruction §”—These effectual Methods are, 1. “CONSTANT LESSONS ‡. 2. CREEDS of *two sorts*; the

* *Essay*, p. 26.

† P. 27

§ P. 33.

‡ P. 34.

“ one

“ one sort, to be a *Compendium* of Christ-
 “ ian doctrines and fundamental principles
 “ of Faith * ; the other to be *characteristic*
 “ of the Church established, serving as
 “ *Symbols* to distinguish it from all others †
 “ —3. A larger SCHEME or SYSTEM of
 “ doctrines, agreeably to which the Clergy
 “ are to be bound to frame their public
 “ instructions ‡” — And lastly, “ To give
 “ all these Institutions the greater strength
 “ and permanency, the Magistrate will in-
 “ corporate them with his Civil consti-
 “ tution. By means like these will the
 “ Christian magistrate endeavour to estab-
 “ lish among his subjects true and genuine
 “ Christianity § — and lay the best founda-
 “ tion for the prosperity, peace and lasting
 “ security of the State ||.” — Such is our
 Essayist's Plan of a Religious establishment.
 The Reader may see it at large within the

* *Essay*, p. 34.

§ P. 38.

† P. 36.

|| P. 39.

‡ Ibid.

compass of twelve pages, *viz.* from the twenty-sixth to the thirty-ninth *.

LET us now examine the Scheme, and see how far such a Church-establishment is calculated to promote the ends above mentioned, *viz.* Civil liberty and True religion, that is, Christianity.

FIRST then, with regard to the *Persons* who, in our author's judgement, are to frame the laws of public instruction. These are not to be appointed by the State. "Christianity hath set them apart." They are "an Order of men dedicated by Christianity to this very purpose of public instruction."— But this wants proof.

* Out of which number of pages no fewer than *seven* are spent in proving, that this Order of holy men ought, in justice, to have a provision from the State, and need not be *shy* or *scrupulous* upon Christian principles of accepting it at the hands of the Magistrate.

And

And surely the position is too consequential to be admitted without one. Not a few pages of the Essay are taken up in proving a matter of much less moment or doubt. The Reader will not find that I exaggerate the account, when I assert, that more pages are spent in proving that "a Christian may be a Magistrate," than are spent in the proof of any other single position through the whole book *. And yet it hath not been thought worth the while to take one step towards justifying the assumption of this blessed Principle. It were the more reasonable this should have been done, as the trouble could not

* At the end of the *thirteenth* page of the Essay the author comes to his conclusion, as follows — "We may venture to conclude, therefore, that there may be such a thing as a Christian magistrate, a point which seems indeed to admit of *little* doubt; but yet, if we listen to the kind of reasoning which is frequently made use of, we must be sensible that it was not proper to leave it without its Proof."

be very great. One single reference to scripture, where the appointment of such an Order of men is to be met with, would have been sufficient. For, if Christianity hath set apart, hath dedicated such an Order of men to such a purpose, it will be mentioned in the New Testament. And we may hope, that our author will not refer us to any other authority under the name of Christianity for the institution of this sacred Order. It is not my business now to controvert the position, but to consider its consequence.

THE Church, then, by this principle is at once made essentially *independent* on Civil magistracy. Nor any harm that I know of in the consequence, if the principle rest on Scripture-authority. Let the advocates for Civil liberty go on declaiming against Church-power. Let them represent the Independency of Churchmen on the state, as the source of the greatest

greatest Oppressions that Christendom hath ever yet experienced. I shall think it all empty declamation or spiteful representation, when I am convinced that our author hath Scripture on his side. I shall still esteem Oppression of every kind a wicked thing. But I will never more impute any kind or degree of it to this cause. From the public instructions of an Order of men, whom Christianity hath set apart and dedicated to this *very purpose*, could not proceed those lucrative mysteries, those fraudulent practices, those vast encroachments on the natural rights and liberties of mankind, which have been laid to the door of *Mother-church*. They must have issued from another source. They must have sprung, not from this separate and sacred Order of men, but from false and unholy, that is, *unconsecrated* or *desecrated* teachers, opposing and perverting the pure doctrines, which must necessarily have flowed from this supposed Order.

TILL it be proved, however, that such an Order, so set apart by Christianity, doth exist, I must take the liberty to observe, that the supposition of its existence lays a foundation for the independence of the Church on Civil magistracy; and to express my apprehension, that a Plan of religious establishment, which sets out with such a principle, cannot be favourable either to the liberties of mankind, or to true and genuine Christianity.

FOR let us suppose the Christian magistrate to be possessed of this idea, “ that
 “ Christianity itself hath set apart an Order
 “ of men and dedicated them to this very
 “ purpose of public instruction:” He will not only, as our author hath expressed it, “ *naturally* make use of these men, and
 “ encourage them in their labours by temporal benefits and civil advantages;” but He will consider himself *bound* to do this;
 bound

bound to make use of their labours, to set them to work in framing Systems of public instruction and to encourage them therein; bound *Himself* implicitly to submit to their Judgements in Spiritual matters, and to conspire with them in gaining a favourable reception of their doctrines among *all his Subjects*.

ON the other hand, the Reverend Gentlemen, who under this idea of the Magistrate find themselves comfortably provided for and highly respected, will neither seek to impede in Him the cause of such blessed effects, nor, it is like enough, will be a whit behind Him in the idea of their own Sanctity of character and Consequence in the State. For, weak as human nature is found to be, why may we not suppose, that many of them may sincerely believe, that they *are*, what they perceive themselves to be *taken for*?—Reverenced by the Laity and the Magistrate himself, as an holy
and

and separate Order, we cannot wonder if, while many among them are equally weak to consider themselves in that light, and as receiving no greater regard than what is due to them, others of them should want not Covetousness, Ambition, or Cunning to avail themselves of so fit a pretence to establish and raise their Authority in the State.

IN short, we may clearly perceive an Hierarchy forming itself on this Principle*; an Hierarchy, which bids fair, not

* If the Reader be desirous of seeing the Effect and Operation of this Principle fully illustrated, He may consult a work* entitled, *An Examination of the Scheme of Church Power laid down in the Codex Juris Ecclesiastici Anglicani*, &c. Edit. 3d. 1737. A work this, better deserving the high encomium bestowed upon the Codex, than the Codex itself, which was complimented by the then bishop of *Litchfield and Coventry* in the following words: *A work eminently serviceable to the Church of England; a work which must ever*

* Generally attributed to that able and eminent Lawyer, judge FOSTER,

only

only to be independent upon, but to outgrow and overbear those Principalities and Powers from whom it received its Birth and Sustainance.

AND let it not be said here; This very protection coming from the Magistrate implies not his subjection to the Church, but on the contrary the dependance of that upon Him. For mark the Principle on which this protection is afforded. It is not as the Church-men shall approve themselves to the supreme Magistrate in the discharge of their office, but as they are an holy and separate Order of men, dedicated and set apart to this very purpose of public instruction, not by Him but by Christianity itself. Their doctrines, therefore, whose institution He himself acknowledges to be of CHRIST, are not to be judged by Him,

be considered as a Standard by all competent Judges; the best book that hath been written on the subject it treats, since the reformation. Charge to his Clergy, Anno 1734. p. 35.

nor

nor to be questioned by any of his Subjects.

Of consequence, He protects them on a principle of *duty*, and of *submission* to them as infallible guides in religion ; whose doctrines must be received for truth, and the precepts and commandments founded thereon be obeyed.

AND who sees not the happy Connection that subsists between this Idea in the Magistrate and the Claim of these Holy men to his encouragement?—If they are his Guides in religion, who are to teach him his duty in all the various Branches thereof, it is not likely they will leave him uninstructed in the duty He owes to the Church, and in the distribution to be made *more especially to this Household of Faith*. Who sees not, that there is no end or bound to the encouragement due on this Footing?—All the rewards that He can confer upon them will not, we may be sure, be considered by them as above their deservings

ings, or any thing " more than an Act of " justice" — The Church may make her own demands of " Temporal benefits and " Civil advantages ;" and, if She doth it discreetly, speciously grafting the reasonableness of them on her doctrines and traditions, She will certainly succeed in obtaining them.

THIS pretence, therefore, that there exists an Order of men set apart by Christianity and dedicated to the very purpose of public instruction, must nearly affect the Rights of Civil magistracy, and bear them down in time under this claim of an exclusive Jurisdiction in Spirituals.

BUT, whatever becomes of the rights of the Magistrate, the foundation of an absolute tyranny over the Consciences of men is certainly laid in this position of our Essayist. For these Public teachers may make what regulations they please in the
D Church,

Church, respecting Faith and Doctrine. The pretence to infallibility, which must be allowed them on this Principle, will suffice whereon to erect their own Systems of opinions, and to make them considered as of equal or even superiour authority to the Christian system. For, considered as a dedicated Order of men, though they may acknowledge themselves to be fallible and peccable, as Individuals, each in his private judgement and conduct; yet in their Public acts and decisions they will not be supposed to err. With respect to the errors and misconduct also of individuals among them, they will claim an exclusive right to the cognizance thereof, and fix their own modes of reformation.

By these means grew up the power of the Church of *Rome*, at first, *protected* only and *encouraged* (to use our author's soft and gentle terms) by the Civil-magistrate, but on a Principle which nourished the
 seeds

seeds of Tyranny. And, indeed, without this Pretence, of having in it an Order of men set apart by Christianity for the purpose of public instruction, I cannot see how that Church could have succeeded as She has, in establishing her Dominion,

SUCH, however, is the Foundation on which our author lays his Church-establishment. This done, he proceeds to show the justice and propriety of a *Provision being made for this holy Order of men by the State*. “ They are Labourers,” he pleads, “ for the State and *ought* by the State to “ be provided for.” What more reasonable indeed for the two-fold labour they sustain, as Ministers of the *Gospel* and Ministers of *State*?—Nor let the reader imagine, that I want to divert myself here with a mere play upon the word. For, though I am somewhat disposed to be merry (and who can be grave?) on reading

the author's serious Plea for this provision, and observing his extreme anxiety to remove any Objections from a too great delicacy of sentiment in Church-men about accepting the provision; yet seriously I apprehend, that he means to enforce upon the Magistrate the duty of providing for them, from the expediency of employing them in *other* matters than what concern *only* religion. One may trace, in almost every sentence, the high idea our author entertains of their consequence in State as well as Church. And, on his plan, busy they certainly will be in State affairs. But I have shown they may be labouring *against* and not *for* the State, and encroaching on the just rights of Civil-magistracy; nay, that it is more than probable this will be the case, if they be encouraged on the mere pretence of being a holy and separated Order, and if there be in Christianity no foundation for the pretence.

THE encouragement and protection of the Magistrate, Church-men are in reason and good policy entitled to, on this footing, *viz.* that, within their proper sphere, they discharge their duty to the State faithfully; that they co-operate in their spiritual labours with the Civil magistrate in promoting that end which He should always have in view, namely, the free propagation of Christian knowledge, taking upon him to check and restrain such teachers as shall affect, and even to punish such as shall venture to claim, a right of judging the Consciences of any of his subjects. For, whatever power the Magistrate ought not to affect *Himself* in matters of religion, this is most certainly his duty, as a Christian magistrate, to see, that all his subjects shall enjoy an equal liberty in that great Kingdom of truth and righteousness, wherein no man, not even Himself, shall be called *Master*.

BUT

BUT our Essayist, in his Scheme of ecclesiastical legislation, is for protection, encouragement, and a provision being granted to these Holy men, without any the least controul, that I can find, upon their measures, ministrations, or views, be they what they will. This is not to reward them for their useful labours to the State, but to seat them in Power. It is not to encourage them in their Gospel-ministrations, but to tempt them rather to minister unto Themselves. It is not, in short, to afford them protection against the enemies to our Holy religion, to countenance them against the scoffs of infidels, or defend them from the persecution of bigotry and party-spirit in religion, but to protect and uphold them in their own designs and projects of rule and domination.

WE are told indeed, that the clergy need not be shy of accepting this provision;
 “ that

“ that there is nothing in the Christian
 “ laws to restrain them from it, but on the
 “ contrary every thing to incline them to
 “ unite all their powers with His, in ac-
 “ complishing a design plainly calculated
 “ for the public good *.” But what De-
 sign does the author refer to?—It is not easy
 to determine. No Design had been par-
 ticularly mentioned. He seems however
 to mean, *Public instruction*; the design or
 very purpose for which an Order of men
 hath been set apart. But then, of the pub-
 lic good, so far as regards the method of
 promoting it by public instruction, we find
 These men and not the Magistrate are to
 be the judges; and He is to unite all his
 power with theirs, in accomplishing the de-
 sign. For, having ended his laboured vin-
 dication of their right to a National provi-
 sion, he proceeds in the next place to the
Laws of teaching, which These men, under

* *Essay*, p. 33.

the favour and protection of the Magistrate, are to set forth.

“THE Church,” says he, “thus acting
“ under the protection of the Magistrate,
“ will set on foot all the most effectual
“ methods of instruction*.”—*The church*
is to do this, acting (it is not said, by the
appointment, with the approbation, or
under the authority, but) under the *pro-*
tection of the Magistrate. In this our
author is at least consistent. For who so
proper, who so fit and sufficient to ordain
all things appertaining to religion, as that
holy Order which is here denominated
THE CHURCH?—The Magistrate is not
surely to become a Teacher of the people,
when there is an Order of men set apart
for this very purpose. Much less is He
to take upon him to teach and dictate to
this separate and dedicated Order, what

* *Essay*, p. 33.

they shall set forth to be believed (professed at least) * and taught by the Clergy, and to be believed and practised by the Laity. The business of the Magistrate is only to *protect* them in this good design, not to *direct* or *controul* them therein. To *them* alone is entrusted the great work of Church-legislation. To *Him* it belongs, to support the authority of the *Lawgivers*. For thus saith our advocate for Establishments in religion — “ These regulations † are ne-

* Dr. Ibbetson, in his Plea for Subscription, is for opening a *latitude for private judgement* with respect to the subscribing clergy; though, to do him justice, he is not for explaining subscription quite away to a *Public profession* only. He observes, however, that Bishop *Stillington* (who engaged in the same *honourable cause*) “ was thought to be of opinion, that those who “ subscribed to the articles were not obliged *to believe* “ them true.” — See his Plea for Subscription, p. 5.

† Mentioned above in the epitome of the Plan, p. 6, 7. *viz.* Creeds, Systems of faith and doctrines, &c.

E

“ cessary

“ necessary for maintaining the peace, or-
 “ der, and safety of the *Church*, and for
 “ preserving the purity of *its* doctrines.
 “ The Magistrate, therefore, will *protect*
 “ *the Church* in the use of them, and will
 “ *enforce the Observation* of them by his
 “ own authority *.”

THUS the *Church* is to be *protected in every thing* She thinks proper to enact. She is to enjoy all the countenance and favour of the Civil magistrate. His resentment is to fall only on *those* that slight Her authority. A minister of wrath is He to all that do evil unto Her, but a praise and protection to them that do well by Her.

AFTER this representation of Church-
 authority, the Essayist might have spared

* *Essay*, p. 38.

himself,

himself *all* (and indeed he has not given himself *much*) trouble, to point out the *reasonableness* and *expediency* of the Laws of teaching, which are to obtain in this Establishment: Since an Establishment of this nature, founded upon the principle above mentioned, can have no methods of public instruction, but what must be effectual and holy. However, as he hath appealed from the Church to the judgment of the public, for their reasonableness and expediency towards promoting genuine Christianity, we are at liberty in our examination of them to allow nothing to her authority,

FIRST then; Constant LESSONS are mentioned as one *effectual method* of public instruction. From *whence* they are to be taken, or what *kind* of instruction they are to convey, it is not told us. The only description by which we are left to judge of their utility is, that they are to be "the

“ constant lessons of its [the Church’s]
 “ appointed teachers” — But let us clear a
 little before us.

WHAT this writer has hitherto meant by
The Church (if it is not already obvious
 enough) shall here be repeated. *The*
Church, according to him, is “ an Order
 “ of men, who are set apart by Christianity
 “ and dedicated to this very purpose of
 “ public instruction,” whom the Magistrate
 is to make use of and protect. This is
The Church which, he had said, “ thus act-
 “ ing under the protection of the Magis-
 “ trate, will set on foot all the most effect-
 “ ual methods of instruction.” This is
The Church, of which he now says that,
 “ beside the constant lessons of its appoint-
 “ ed teachers, it hath its Creeds, &c.” —
 How then are we to understand this last
 mode of expression? — Are we to distin-
 guish *now* between *The Church* and its ap-
 pointed teachers? — But, according to the
 idea he hath given us of *The Church*, there
 can

can be no real distinction. *The Church* being an Order of men set apart by Christianity for the purpose of Public instruction; *The Church* and its appointed teachers are the *same thing*. We cannot understand the author, therefore, when he tells us, that *The Church* "hath the constant lessons" of its appointed teachers," otherwise than if he had said, that *The Church* hath constant lessons appointed *by itself*. I take this pains as well in justice to the writer and myself, that he may not be misrepresented nor I accused of being a *careless Examiner**, as that the Reader may not be imposed upon by words and the appearance of a distinction, where there is none, — To return :

Now, so far as the utility and expediency of these Lessons may be argued for from the authority of the appointers, we have nothing, as hath been

* See Dr. Rutherford's SECOND VINDICATION of Subscription, p. 12. and the LETTER in answer to it, p. 7, 8.

observed,

observed, to allow for *that*; the sacredness and infallibility of the Order not being granted.

FOR the other circumstance then, *viz.* that these lessons are to be *constant*: This can be no recommendation of them, unless the subject matter thereof be *good in itself*, and be moreover *so applied* as that it may tend to edification,

FOR, if the lessons be bad in themselves, which may be the case, if not taken from Scripture (and we are not told from whence they are to be taken) their being appointed to be read *constantly* is only so much the worse. Or, if candour oblige us to suppose, that the writer understands by LESSONS, certain portions of *Scripture*, to be read to the people constantly, at stated times; yet, if the Church appoint, that this be done in a language which the people *do not understand*, what advantage can
arise

arise from these *constant* Lessons? — How can they be an “*effectual* method of Public instruction?” — Or, lastly:

IF we suppose them both to be taken from Scripture, and also to be read in the Vulgar tongue; yet, unless they be judiciously *selected* and properly *applied*, there can no great advantage arise from their being *constant* and *invariable*. For, although *all Scripture* be written for our instruction, yet no one will maintain, that *all* the parts thereof are *equally* edifying; that the *Curses*, for instance, selected chiefly out of the twenty-seventh chapter of *Deuteronomy*, and appointed in Our church to be pronounced by the minister but once a year*, might, with equal propriety, have been ap-

* On the first day of Lent, commonly called *Ash-wednesday*. I have said *but* once a year *appointed*, though the Service *may* be used on other days, at the *discretion* of the Ordinary.

pointed to be *constantly* read in the room of the *Ten Commandments*, on the Sundays and Holy days throughout the year; or, that the first chapter of *The Chronicles* and the tenth of *Nehemiah* contain as *edifying* matter for Christian men, in their several relations and respective ranks in life, as the twelfth and thirteenth to *the Romans*.

IN mentioning, therefore, the appointment of *constant lessons*, as one of the *effectual* methods of public instruction to be set on foot by the Church, the author should have propounded their *quality*, and the *adaption* of them (if I may so speak) to the general condition of Christians, as well as to certain occasions, national occurrences, and other circumstances of the people, for whose service they are intended. This was necessary to the illustration of their utility, and the *expediency* of enjoining the *constant* use of them, without suffering

suffering the officiating minister to use his discretion at all in the matter.

THE next *effectual* method which the Church will set on foot is CREEDS. In pleading for the establishment of these, our author has not left his cause so entirely bare of argument as on the preceding head. Besides the constant Lessons, the Church, says he, "hath its *Creeds*, containing in a "small compass all the outlines and fundamental principles of Faith. It hath "its short and plain account of the principal duties of religion, in all its branches. "By these a general knowledge of religion will easily be propagated and kept "up amongst the people. This is the "first intention and principal use of "creeds."

I AM extremely ready to grant, that *such* Creeds may be of great and admirable use, "in spreading among the people and
F "maintaining

“ maintaining in their minds an uniform
 “ and comprehensive knowledge of the
 “ fundamentals at least of their Holy faith,
 “ which they themselves could neither so
 “ well distinguish, digest into order nor
 “ retain in their memories, if they had
 “ them to seek, as they lie diffused through
 “ the whole Body of the Scriptures.”—To
 all this I entirely agree. But, as neither our
 Essayist nor myself are to frame the *Creeds*
 according to our private judgement, but
 they are to be established by Church-au-
 thority, how can we be assured that they
 will be thus drawn up; that they will con-
 tain, in a *small compass*, *all* the outlines and
 fundamental principles of Faith, a short
 and plain account of the *principal* duties of
 religion in *all* its branches?—How can we
 be sure, that they will not be *defective* here-
 in, containing hardly any of the chief and
 important truths and principles of religion:
 In which case the people may be tempted
 to take up with an imperfect view of their
 faith,

faith, and to rest their religion (without troubling themselves to search the Scriptures) upon these brief formularies of faith and doctrine as sufficiently comprehensive, while they are in reality very defective. The bulk of mankind are very apt to do this, to rely too much upon what is set forth to them by human authority in matters of faith and doctrine, to consider themselves as being of the true Church, because they believe, or it may be, because they are able to repeat, the Established creeds, and to need no farther light and knowledge from the Word of G O D, than what they are thus helped to and but too frequently taught to regard as amply sufficient.

ON the other hand, we cannot be assured, that these Creeds will be kept within that *small compass*, and have that degree of *perspicuity*, which, it is justly observed, they should have. Instead of being "*short*

“ and *clear*, made easy both to the understanding and memory *,” they may be *perplexed* and *intricate*, *numerous* and *obscure*, stuffed with *needless* articles and unintelligible jargon: Nay, they may contain *false* and *pernicious* doctrine. And it is more than probable, that a Church, founded on the principle our author sets out with, will in her Creeds have an eye to the establishing in the minds of the people, something else than or beside Christian faith and doctrine.

AND right sorry I am to find, that our author thinks not this the *sole* intention of Creeds, *viz.* the spreading and maintaining in the minds of the people, pure and unmixed, the Christian faith and doctrine, and the Public profession of the same; but that he has in his eye another end of Established creeds. “ A secondary use of

* *Essay*, p. 36.

“ Creeds,

" Creeds," he observes, " arises from the
 " former. For, as Creeds contain the great
 " Articles of faith embraced by the Church,
 " they must be characteristic of that
 " Church, serving as symbols to distin-
 " guish it from all others."—But how can
 they answer this end, if they contain in a
 small compass all the outlines and funda-
 mental principles of religion; if they con-
 tain nothing but Christian faith and doc-
 trine?—They cannot contain *only* Christian
 faith and doctrine, and yet be characteristic
 of that particular Church by which they
 are framed. They are so far Symbols of
Christianity only, and characterise not that
 Christian church, community or establish-
 ment from any other. To do this, they
 must be drawn up, not in short catholic
 forms comprehending only fundamentals
 and general principles, but in more narrow
 and straightened forms into which are
 crowded all the *peculiarities* of faith and
 doctrine which are embraced by the mo-
 dellers

dellers of the Ecclesiastical system. And thus, the first intention and principal use itself of Creeds would be counteracted and totally defeated by these *characterising* Formularies: Since they must respect something else than fundamentals, some things which are certainly unnecessary and may be antichristian,

AND to this, how palpably absurd, not to say impious and iniquitous it were, to call upon a Christian assembly, who profess one common faith with all other Christian societies, solemnly to confess to ALMIGHTY GOD their faith in certain articles which He hath not required them to make confession of, which are confessedly of human authority, while they acknowledge no other authority than that of CHRIST, and which are Symbols of a Party-church, differencing their particular establishment from all others! This were, at least, to glory in those distinctions and differences which

which are rather to be lamented, and of which Christians may be ashamed. Nothing should distinguish one Christian church from another, regarding faith and doctrine. Their faith as well as doctrine should be one and the same. Nor indeed can the faith be conveyed unadulterated from age to age by one Christian church (the end our author would have these Symbols to answer) on monuments which serve to distinguish it from any other Christian church *. This were to suppose that CHRIST is *divided*, that his kingdom is not *one* and that all his disciples are not baptized into *one* faith. Whatever therefore else may be used as a distinguishing characteristic of one Christian church from another, Creeds, which relate only to matters of faith and doctrine, ought not, and Christian creeds *cannot* be applied to this purpose.

* *Essay*, p. 36.

BEFORE we pass on to the other effectual method of Public instruction to be provided by the Church, it will be extremely proper to take some notice of what is advanced concerning the *Authority* for the use of Creeds.

“As to the authority,” saith this writer, “on which they stand; let it be observed, that OUR SAVIOUR himself hath sanctified the use of Creeds by *his own repeated practice**.”—Indecently and irreverently observed, I should say, were I sure that the man could mean what he here asserts! — For, did OUR LORD then stand in need of these helps to maintain in His mind, by a frequent and repeated practice, a comprehensive knowledge of the fundamentals of religion? — The Creeds recom-

* *Essay*, p. 35.

mended by our Essayist are to be of this nature. " This is the first intention and " principal use of them, to keep up in the " mind, as well as to propagate a general " knowledge of religion." If OUR SAVIOUR then did himself repeatedly practise them, we must suppose that He had the first intention and principal use of them in view. But surely OUR LORD needed not for any such purpose to make confession of His faith in such kind of forms. He had not to *learn* religion, who published the truth as it was from heaven, through any such medium as that of Creeds.

BUT, says our author: — " The *Forms* " He made use of were indeed extremely " short and simple; but still they were as " much and as truly *Creeds*, though they " contained but one article of faith, as if " they had contained many*." — I must,

* *Essay*, p. 35.

however, insist upon it, that OUR SAVI-
 OUR never *Himself* used *Creeds* at all;
 much less did He sanctify them by *frequently* and *repeatedly* practising them, as
 an *effectual method* of instruction. A *Creed*
 (such as we are now enquiring about)
 contains a *Confession* or *Profession* of a per-
 son's Faith. For our author himself had
 but just before observed, as an argument
 for the use of *Creeds*, that "Confession of
 "faith is clearly a Christian duty and
 "ought to make a part of Public wor-
 "ship*." — Now will he be hardy enough
 to maintain it, that OUR LORD made a
Profession of His faith, when he asked such
 questions as this, *Believest thou this?* — It is
 no more an instance of *His* using *Creeds*,
 than his frequently exhorting His disciples
 in the following form, *Watch and pray*, is
 an instance, that He used *Forms* of prayer.
 If this last form of speaking is not a PRAY-

* *Essay*, p. 35.

ER, neither is the first a CREED. Creeds are not usually drawn up in an Interrogatory form. Yet such is the instance brought by our author, of CHRIST having *Himself* sanctified the use of Creeds by His own frequent and repeated Practice, and of the Forms *He* made use of being really and truly CREEDS.

BUT I will be candid enough to suppose, that he meant not to be thus grossly absurd and irreverent. Let us put it, that he would plead for the use of Creeds, not from OUR SAVIOUR'S own use of them, "His own frequent and repeated Practice" therein, but from His frequently demanding of others a Profession of their faith; that he means not, as he hath expressed himself, that the Forms which OUR SAVIOUR *Himself* used, were really and truly *Creeds* (for they were but Questions or Commands, not *Professions of faith*) but that the Forms, which *those persons*, who

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made

used

made Profession of their faith to Him, were really *Creeds*. Yet what would our author infer from this? — That the Church is authorized to make *Creeds*? to establish certain *Forms* in which the people shall rehearse the articles of their belief (if peradventure believed)? — This doth not follow. Did OUR LORD do this? — Did he establish certain *Formularies* of faith to be rehearsed? — Or, did He require the persons questioned by Him to profess their belief in *preconceived* Forms? — He certainly did not. How then is OUR SAVIOUR'S practice, in this respect, authority for *Creed-making* or prescribing *Formularies* of faith?

BUT it may be thought good Authority, in respect of the *people*, for *their* use of *Creeds*, for making a public Profession of their faith *frequently*, that OUR LORD
frequently

frequently * called upon men in this form, *Believest thou this?* — But it doth not even prove so much. Let us not be imposed upon, in making our conclusions, by the mere *turn* of a sentence. OUR LORD did *frequently* and *repeatedly* call upon men to believe some truth, and to profess their belief of the same. But did he call upon men to profess *frequently* and *repeatedly* their belief thereof? — He did not. Having received once a Profession of faith from the persons of whom he demanded it, He did not moreover command them to *repeat* the same *frequently* and *statedly*.

THE use of Creeds, therefore, or the Establishment of articles of faith and doctrine in the form of *Creeds*, as a *most*

* “ *Believest thou this?* says our author, was His “introduction to almost every miracle.” I do not find, however, this form used by OUR LORD *frequently* in the presence of the multitude.

effectual

effectual Method of public instruction, rests not on any such Authority, as our Essayist hath asserted. Much less is the *Secondary* use of Creeds, viz. as the *Characterising symbols* of the Church established, “sanctified by OUR SAVIOUR’S own repeated practice.”

I SHALL but just observe further, on the curious instances we are referred to by our author of Creeds in *just form*, that, should we grant him his authority, viz. OUR SAVIOUR’S own repeated practice, and that the forms made use of by Him are really and truly Creeds, then it will follow, that the people should make use of those very Creeds, the use of which hath been sanctified by OUR LORD’S own repeated practice. “The forms He made use of were,” it is alledged, “as much and as truly Creeds, though they contained but one article of faith, as if they had contained many.” — If so; why make any other?

other? — What can better spread among the people and maintain in their minds “ an uniform and comprehensive knowledge of the fundamentals of their Holy faith,” than *those forms*, which CHRIST himself made use of and hath sanctified by *His own* repeated practice? — Why draw up *formularies* of faith, containing *many* articles, when OUR SAVIOUR himself hath sanctified the use of *such extremely short and simple forms* as, according to our author, contained but *one* article of faith *? — If his Example therefore be justly brought here as an argument for the use of Creeds, the framers of Creeds should see to it, that they encourage not men in a contrary practice; nor can they be justified in calling upon the people to profess their faith in Forms of a different cast.

WE come now to the third *effectual method* of instruction to be provided by the

* *Essay*, p. 35.

Church. "The Church," saith this writer,
 "will provide further, that none but its
 "genuine doctrines be taught by those to
 "whom it commits the office of public
 "instruction. For their direction it will
 "provide a larger Scheme of doctrines,
 "guarding more particularly against the
 "principal errors which have from time
 "to time prevailed." — On which I ob-
 serve first, that after what hath been laid
 down by our author on the subject of
 Creeds, this *Larger scheme* of doctrines
 must be altogether *useless* and *superfluous*,
 at least. For the Established creeds con-
 taining all the outlines and fundamental
 principles of faith, together with an account
 of the principal duties of religion in all its
 various branches; the *principal* errors which
 from time to time have prevailed are already
 guarded against. If that be the end and
 intention of this Larger scheme of doc-
 trines, *viz.* the prevention of principal er-
 rors, its use is superseded by Creeds. They
 cannot

cannot be *principal* errors into which the people are in danger of falling, if Creeds be such an effectual method of maintaining in their minds the *fundamentals* of their Holy faith and the *principal* duties of their religion. They can only be the *lesser* errors, such as affect not the vital part of religion. And whether it is not better to suffer errors of this nature to be refuted, as occasion may require, in the general exhortations and admonitions of the Clergy to the people and by the people's own careful and diligent perusal of the Word of G O D, than to provide Large systems of doctrines for this purpose, it may be sufficient for me to recommend it to the author to reconsider. For surely he will see the impropriety, not to say the absurdity of proposing a Larger scheme of doctrines for the purpose, when he reflects upon his own observation, that Creeds, which are to contain the fundamentals of faith and principal duties of religion, " ought to be *short* and

H

" clear,

“ clear, made easy both to the understanding and *memory*.” For why this, I would ask?—Why should they be *short* in the account of fundamentals and principal points in religion, if through such brevity the Principal errors are not sufficiently guarded against?

BUT the plain truth is, our author has quite another end to be answered by this Larger scheme of doctrines, than to guard the people against *errors* in religion at all. It is the safety of the *Established* church that he appears to be concerned for. It is the *outward* peace, unity, and prosperity thereof which this Larger system is to secure; the peace and prosperity of *The church*, in his own idea of the word, *viz.* that sacred Order of men set apart by Christianity for the purpose of public instruction; in other words, *Ecclesiastical* men. This will appear from considering the *nature* and *mode* of this provision.

THIS

THIS Larger scheme, then, of Systematical articles is to be as a *directory* to the Clergy, what they shall hold themselves and declare to the people, touching *Church-matters*, and what they shall not. For therein “ the Church will provide, that “ *none but its* genuine doctrines be taught “ by them.” It hath already provided, as we have seen, by two *most effectual methods*, for the security of *Christian doctrine* among the people : It is now to provide some security for *itself*, its own preservation and welfare. The *most effectual method* our author can think of for this end is, that “ It “ should require the assent of the Clergy to “ this System of doctrines and *bind* them “ by some proper engagement, to frame “ their public instructions agreeably to it. “ The Church,” it is added, “ owes this to “ *its own preservation*.”—But how can this be, if by, *The Church*, was meant a Society of *christians* ; and by, *its preservation*, the

H 2 maintenance

maintenance of the same in the *genuine doctrines of Christianity*? — No Christian church can owe to its own preservation such a means as our author proposes to be made use of for that end. To preserve it a *truly Christian* church such a provision only ought to be made of doctrines, as may ensure in the properest and most effectual manner the teaching of *genuine Christianity*.

Now, let us admit (for I will allow as much to this writer as may be allowed for the argument's sake) that for this purpose [the preservation of genuine Christianity] it is necessary to *bind* the Clergy by some Engagement to frame their public instructions agreeably to the *Creeds* above-mentioned, those *short, clear* and *comprehensive* Formularies of faith and doctrine: What need to bind them further than this?—If the security of *Christian* doctrine only be intended by the Engagement, the maintenance

tenance of unity of opinion touching the *true faith*, and, in short, the preservation of the Church as a *truly Christian* one; *such* a bond upon the Clergy would be sufficient. They are now, by the supposition, no longer at liberty to propagate what opinions they please, nor to spread among the people “ any of those Principal “ errors, which from time to time have “ prevailed.” They are bound to propagate such opinions only, as are consistent with the true and *genuine* principles of *Christianity*, contained in the *short* but *comprehensive* Formularies *subscribed* (for *subscription* I suppose the author may think the proper Engagement): And how can the Church “ be thrown into confusion, be “ rent and divided an hundred ways *” and its very safety endangered, while it thus rests on its own Essential principles for its support and stability?

* *Essay*, p. 37.

If indeed there be other doctrines extraneous to Christianity, and especially if there be a great variety of them, insisted upon by the Established church to be subscribed by the Clergy and received from them by the people; these indeed must either be uniformly taught and uniformly received, or confusion in *The church* will ensue. The *Establishment* may thus “ be
 “ rent and divided an hundred ways, and,
 “ in a word, destroyed (as our author has
 “ very properly, I dare say, not *industri-*
 “ *ously*, expressed it) *under its own commis-*
 “ *sion* *.” For this division, this destruction of the Church will not be owing to the *want* of this Larger scheme of *its* genuine doctrines and subscription thereto, but to the Church’s *commission*, requiring the same and attempting to enforce the observation of the Engagement upon the Clergy and the re-

* *Essay*, p. 37.

ception of its doctrines among the Laity. But how effectual soever such a means might prove for the stability and preservation of a Church as established, this is not our enquiry. I am not examining how far our author's Plan is effectual for preserving the peace and unity of any Particular church, but how far it illustrates the expediency of Establishments in religion by the provision it points out for the peace and purity of the Christian church.

BUT, says our author; "The very act
 " of accepting from any Church a com-
 " mission to teach, implies an obligation to
 " teach the doctrines of *that* church *"—
 The matter is out — The obligation to
 teach according to this Larger system arises
 from a *commission* received from the
 Church. If it arose from the nature of
 Christianity itself, it would be found to bind

* *Essay*, p. 37.

to the teaching *only* the genuine doctrines of Christianity. But that is not the case. The obligation, having its origin no higher than in the *commission* accepted from the Church, binds to the teaching, besides genuine Christianity, the peculiar doctrines of that Particular church, or, as our author has it, *its* genuine doctrines.

So that it is plain, our author means, by what he hath advanced on this head of subscription to the Larger system, to illustrate the duty of the Teaching clergy towards the Ecclesiastical rulers or Church-governours. Accordingly, he thus supports his argument: " For no church can
 " be supposed to give a power to be ex-
 " erted to its own ruin ; nor ought any one
 " to use the power, with which he is in-
 " vested against *that* church from which
 " he received it *." The reasoning is

* *Essay*, p. 37.

just, if we may grant him his premise, that every Church has a right to enlist men into its peculiar service, to grant *commissions* to teach doctrines which are peculiarly adapted to its Establishment, and to bind them to teach none other; or that any men are warranted by the Gospel to accept of such a *commission*. But no security ought to be demanded by the Church, which binds to teach any thing that *may be* inconsistent with Christianity; nor ought such security to be given the Church. Such a security is unreasonable, though it bind only (as our author artfully suggests) “to that which the nature of the trust in it-
“self implies*,” the nature of the trust itself being iniquitous and implying an abridgement of that liberty, which every minister of the Gospel ought, and which every conscientious minister will assert.

* *Essay*, p. 37.

FOR, let me ask here: What are the doctrines contained in this Larger system, according to which the Clergy are to be bound by some proper engagement to frame their instructions? — They are to be the genuine doctrines of the Established church and *none but its* genuine doctrines. I ask again therefore: What are its genuine doctrines? — They are not here specified, nor any otherwise characterized, than as being necessary for the preservation of the Particular establishment which sets them forth. They may therefore be Christian or Antichristian, as it shall happen, or as they may be thought necessary for the *end* proposed by them. If what is called, *The Church*, has any other end in view, while She thus seeks her own security and preservation, than the promotion of Christian knowledge and practice, the System will be calculated accordingly. If, for instance, the grand object be her own aggrandizement

ment and acquisition of power and dominion in the State, such doctrines will be set forth in the Larger scheme, as must be directly repugnant to the spirit of the Gospel. Care will be taken to impose upon the understanding, to captivate the judgment, and to abuse the affections of the people, that they may be the more effectually reduced, and, as it were, bewitched into subjection to the Church. And, if the commission received from the Church imply an obligation to *teach* the doctrines of that Church, the obligation of the people to *believe* those doctrines will be inferred.

WE have, therefore, in this Plan of Church-government, no fence against the most pernicious errors in religion, nor any security from the most tyrannous and oppressive yoke of imposition, that ever disgraced the Christian church. And, if we consider either the infirmity of human nature in general, how liable men are to be

corrupted in their principles under the prospect of power and preeminence over their fellow creatures, or what hath been actually the conduct of Churchmen in such circumstances, we shall have reason to believe, that our author's Plan could not take place without danger to the liberties of mankind, as well as to the purity of the Christian doctrine. It contains in it all the outlines and fundamentals of Popery. And, however little danger may be apprehended at this day from such weak observations in favour of arbitrary Establishments in religion, yet they certainly offer an advantage to the adversaries of Our religious establishment in particular, and give strength and animation to the insidious Papist in his incessant endeavours against Our constitution in Church and State.

BUT, to come to the finishing stroke in this master-piece of Church legislation. "The Magistrate," according to our author,

thor, "is not only to protect the Church
 "in the use of all these regulations, and to
 "enforce the observation of them by his
 "own authority, but he is to consult for
 "her preservation and continuance to fu-
 "ture ages, to establish seminaries for the
 "education of teachers, and to annex last-
 "ing benefits to their office*." — To
 which perpetuating project no reasonable
 man can object, that has no objection to the
 nature and principle of the Regulations
 themselves, or to an office with such
 charming accompaniments to it.

WHAT follows, however, must be
 spoken to. "To give all these instituti-
 "ons the greater strength and permanency,
 "the magistrate," it is said, "will incor-
 "porate them with his Civil constitution†"
 — For my own part, I do not see *how*
 this can well be done ; how such a Religi-

* *Essay*, p. 38.

† *Ibid.*

ous system can unite and form any fair Alliance with Civil government; or how all these institutions of the Church can receive *greater* strength and permanency by an *incorporation* with the Civil constitution. For, is not the Magistrate, before their incorporation, supposed (on our author's Plan) to support the Church by his own authority in every thing She appoints and institutes, in all those Regulations which are necessary for maintaining its peace, order and safety, and in annexing lasting Benefits and Civil advantages to those that engage in its service. — In the following manner, however, it is proposed to be done :

GOVERNMENT, it is observed, and Religion are two distinct and wholly independent institutions; and cannot possibly unite or form any fair Alliance, considered, the former as confined wholly to the care of Civil society, the latter to a man's own Conscience,

science, the care of his Salvation and his happiness in a Future state. But then, Religion having a natural influence on men's behaviour in society; and the regulation of men's behaviour in society being the immediate object of Civil government, there arises, our author thinks, a necessary relation and a strong connection between them *. " And this shews at once," adds he, " how and how far Religion is subject to the Magistrate; and distinctly marks out the limits to which his care over it may extend. As far as Religion operates on society, so far it is subject to the inspection and regulation of the Civil magistrate, and so far only †."—Thus has our author, by a most curious contrivance, attempted to draw together these two distinct and wholly independent Institutions,

* *Essay*, p. 39, 40.

† *Essay*, p. 40.

Religion and Government, into a close union and and fair Alliance.

BUT hath he not been attempting an impossibility?—Upon his own principle he hath. For he acknowledges, “that indeed, as Religion hath to do only with a man’s own conscience, the care of his salvation and his happiness in a future State, it lies entirely out of the Magistrate’s province *.” And hath Religion to do with any thing else, than a man’s own *conscience*, the care of his *salvation* and his *happiness* in a future State? — I will be bold to maintain that it hath *not*, whenever this writer shall venture to undertake the proof that it *hath*. In the mean time, till that be proved, it doth not appear, that Religion is subject to the Civil magistrate, or that, being of this nature, “it can possibly unite and form any fair

* *Essay*, p. 39.

" Alliance with his government, but that
 " the interfering of one with the other
 " will be a manifest usurpation *."

BUT, how necessary a relation soever and strong connection there may be between Religion *itself* and Civil government; let us see how our *author's Religion* can unite and ally with it, so as to become the object of the Magistrate's *inspection* and *regulation*. For, on considering its nature and origin, there appears to me no room left for the Magistrate's regulation of it. I must beg the Reader's leave to lead him once more back, to review with me the general principles of the Ecclesiastical system under examination.

AN Order of men, then, is set apart by Christianity and dedicated for this very purpose of Public instruction. — These the

* *Essay*, p. 39.

Civil magistrate is to make use of, to protect, and encourage in their labours by Temporal benefits and Civil advantages. — The Church, thus acting under the protection of the Magistrate, frames the Laws of public teaching, makes such Regulations, and requires such Engagements of the Clergy, as it judges necessary for maintaining its own peace, order, and safety, and for preserving the purity of *its* doctrines.—The Magistrate moreover is to protect the Church in the use of these regulations, and even to enforce the observation of them by his own authority *.

SUCH is the Foundation of the Establishment planned by our Essayist; such its Institutions; such the Regulations made for its preservation and continuance; and such the Duty of the Civil magistrate to enforce the observation of them by his own autho-

* *Essay*, p. 38.

rity.—Now, how can a Church, previously framed under such Regulations and Institutions, as the Magistrate is supposed in Duty bound to support and by his authority to preserve *inviolable*, be subject to the *inspection* and *regulation* of the Civil magistrate?—By its Incorporation or Alliance, it will be replied, with the Civil constitution.—But it cannot be. The Alliance itself is against it. For what is proposed therein?—How stands the contract of this indissoluble Union between Church and State?—The Words are; **And to give all these Institutions the greater Strength and Permanency, He will incorporate them with his Civil Constitution** *. — So then, it is not to impower the Magistrate to *inspect* and *regulate* the proceedings of the Church, that this Alliance is formed; but that She may have her Rights the more amply secured to Her, that *greater Strength*.

* *Essay*, p. 38.

and *Permanency* may be given to the Regulations already made. He is to incorporate with his Civil constitution *all* the Institutions of the Church, that they may be the better maintained, upholden, and conserved, and not that they may become subject to his Inspection for *alteration*, where He might happen to disapprove them.

SEE, however, another View given us of this Church *incorporate* !—In instituting and framing the Establishment we had been considering the Church as acting not *conjunctly* with, but *separately* from the Civil magistrate; preparing of its own wisdom and workmanship *something* that would be an Help meet for the Magistrate; or, to use our author's allusion, *something* that should be in Civil government what the Soul is in the Body; *something* which, when ready, and wrought up into a form fitted for such a receptacle, should be incorporated

incorporated in it, and by a close Union
 therewith form of two *different* Natures
 or Constitutions one Whole. Over this
 WHOLE the Civil magistrate becomes now
 the Guardian. "The two Parts of this
 " Constitution now closely united has One
 " common interest: Just (continues our
 " author) as the immaterial Spirit and the
 " Body of man, though of *different natures*,
 " do by the laws of their union sympa-
 " thize with each other, and the whole
 " frame is affected by disorders arising in
 " either part, or by their health and wel-
 " fare." — A very different View of the
 matter this, the Church appearing to be no
 gainer in this way! If the Spiritual frame
 is affected by disorders arising in what we
 may call the Bodily frame, it is so far in-
 jured by the Incorporation.

NOR can it be said, that in return for
 this the Church receives strength and vi-
 gour, or security and protection, greater
 than

than what it had before its union. For it was supposed not only to be framed under the protection of the Magistrate, but also to have the sanction of his authority in its favour, to preserve, maintain, and uphold it in all its parts. Such Regulations were made *before* its Alliance as were necessary for maintaining its peace, order, and safety, and for preserving *its* genuine doctrines. The Magistrate was to protect the Church in the use of all these, and to *enforce* the observation of them by his own authority. Could matters go on better for the Church than thus?—or more agreeably to our author's purpose in the Alliance; which was to give the greater strength and permanency to all its Institutions?—Why then, since things were in the fairest way before, take this Perfect being, which, in its Separate state, was enjoying a treatment from the Civil magistrate so agreeable to its constitution; and subject it to all the inconvenience and hardship of being affected by
the

the disorders incident to its unworthier Companion? — It cannot, therefore, be to *its own* advantage to be thus incorporated with disorder and imperfection.

LET us examine, then, what benefit the *State* may reap from this Alliance. In the projected Union of these two different natures our author might have *that* in his eye. Having planned so happily the lasting benefit of the Church in the above-mentioned regulations and institutions, he may intend some improvement to be derived from them to the *State*, the other part of this Compound constitution. And in this view, indeed, the Simile will appear most admirably adapted to illustrate the case. For, as the Soul in man, the immaterial part (as our author calls it) is supposed to be the active, invigorating principle, that which has the Command and Guidance of the Material part, and without whose direction not one member could
rightly

rightly perform its office; so the Church in State, or the Spiritual part of the constitution, is here the active, invigorating Principle which is to guide and regulate the outward frame and system of government. But then its influence will be more extensive and efficacious in some good proportion to the *care* bestowed upon it in its state of Incorporation and Sympathetic union. If in the Body natural any disorder ariseth, which disturbs the peace and tranquillity of the Mind, we naturally seek its relief. We apply to the skilful Physician to correct the disorder, which occasions this pain and uneasiness to the Man; and, if possible, to give such a happy turn to the Outward frame and constitution as may, for the future, secure the ease and welfare of the noble Inhabitant, and therein its freedom of action and native *Command* over the body.

So

So should it fare with our author's Compound being, made up of two very *different* natures, Religion and Politics, or Church and State. The former of the two, being the Spiritual, and, as it were, Essential part of the Compound, is principally and in the first place to be regarded. If, in its incorporated state, it should be rendered uneasy, and find itself somewhat uncomfortable and oppressed, it will naturally seek relief. And it is fitting it should be relieved. For this painful Sympathy is indicative of some *defect* in the Body politic, which requires the attention of the Magistrate. The Church, like the Immaterial spirit in man, is, in *its own frame and distinct* state, perfect and complete. Its imperfections, no more than its sufferings, arise not out of its Original texture (the result of the plastic art of an Holy and Dedicated order) but only from its connexion and close union with the Civil constitution; just as the Immaterial

L spirit

spirit is clogged and borne down under the imperfection, infirmities or casualties of the Body. What is to be done, therefore, by the Civil magistrate, on this fair notice given Him through the grievous complaining of the Church, of some Disorder, *inveterate* perhaps and fundamental, in his Civil constitution? — What should He do, but, respectfully attentive to the warnings of the Spiritual monitor, inspect carefully the whole System — examine what defects it labours under — what parts and members thereof may be disordered and refuse to perform their office in *obedience* to the Church, the Spiritual part, which animates and ought to give life and direction to the Whole — to repair the damage which this Nobler part may have sustained, or defend it from the danger arising to it *from without* — to remove every impediment to the freedom of its operations — to take off every check and restraint, which some froward Politician may have thought necessary to lay

lay upon it—and, in short, to suffer it to take the Lead and Direction in every thing, agreeably to its Native dignity and the very end of its Incorporation?

THUS we see, through the medium of this admirable Simile, what application the Civil magistrate is to make of his power “as Guardian of the Whole constitution and necessarily of his Established religion * :”—“By this means it is, says our author, that Civil pains and penalties can in *any degree* belong to Religion † :” That is, they may be applied by the Magistrate in any degree to maintain the Church or the Established religion: Did I say, the Magistrate *may* do this?—Our strenuous Advocate for the Church asserts, that “He is *obliged*, being entrusted with the Care of the constitution” (of which

* *Essay*, p. 42.

† *Ibid*, p. 42, 43.

the Established religion is now a part) “to
 “maintain it by such means as are in his
 “power, that is, by the application of Ci-
 “vil sanctions*.”

BUT, though He is free to apply them
 in any degree to *this* purpose, the support
 of the *True religion* (for so the Church is
 sometimes called by this author) yet He is
 not to apply them to *another* purpose under
 the pretence of supporting the True reli-
 gion. In the exercise also of his coercive
 power on account of Religion, He is to re-
 strain himself within the following Limits;
 that is to say, 1. “He must not carry it
 “into the regions of *pure* and *unmixed*
 “Religion. 2. He must apply his tem-
 “poral sanctions to Religion only where
 “the preservation of the State’ (of which
 we are to remember the Church incorpo-
 rate makes a most essential part) “calls for

* *Essay*, p. 42.

Thirdly,

“ them. 3. The hardships, laid on the
 “ professors of other Religions than
 “ the True one, should not be *needless*.
 “ 4. The cruel machinery of Persecution
 “ should not be employed against them
 “ for *harmless* opinions *.” — These are the
 only Restrictions under which this writer
 would have the Civil magistrate to exercise
 his Coercive power on account of Reli-
 gion: And they are of so general a nature,
 so indefinitely proposed, that the intelligent
 Reader will hardly allow them to amount to
 any Restriction at all. Notwithstanding any
 one, or all of them put together, the fol-
 lowing Position is the result of our author’s
 reasoning on this part of his Plan: That, if
 Opinions be holden and propagated contrary
 to the *Established* religion, (which by this in-
 corporation becomes a part of the Civil con-
 stitution and essential to its interest and pre-
 servation) and if, for the maintenance, de-

* *Essay*, p. 42.

fence,

fence, and encouragement of the same, the Magistrate shall judge it proper to interpose his authority; let him do what He *will* against the unhappy *dissidents*, on our author's principles, He sinneth not; " Civil
 " pains and penalties belonging in *any de-*
 " *gree* to Religion, and the Magistrate be-
 " ing the sole Guardian of the Whole con-
 " stitution and necessarily of his *Establisb-*
 " *ed religion.*"

HAVING thus examined that Plan of a Religious establishment which is laid down by our Essayist, both as to its nature and its expediency for securing the Liberties of mankind, or the Christian doctrines in their purity; I come now briefly to remark the *Inconsistency* into which he has been betrayed by endeavouring to give an air of plausibility to his work, and to cover the deformed aspect which his Plan, contemplated in its naked form, must have presented.

HE

HE is willing to appear a Defender of Our church-establishment*. But he hath rested its cause on arguments which will justify *any* Religious establishment, not one more than another. Lest this should be objected, his caution serves him but to render all his reasoning inefficient. Thus, for fear you should think him pleading for an Establishment on the principles of Persecution, he tells you at his first setting out, “ that “ the Civil magistrate must refrain from “ persecuting *any* religion†.” By this you are led to expect, that the Civil magistrate is represented throughout the Essay as bound to leave every man in the full and free enjoyment of his Religion. — But softly. — You are told, “ that He cannot “ be *indifferent* towards Religion, till Religion itself shall be a thing of indif-

* *Essay*, p. 49.

† *Ibid*, p. 14.

"ference to Civil society *. — That Reli-
 "gion having unavoidably an influence on
 "Civil society, it must naturally draw on
 "itself the mutual influence of the *Civil*
 "power — That the Magistrate cannot
 "look upon the operations of Religion
 "with *unconcern*; since Religion may be
 "an *enemy* sapping the foundations of his
 "Government †." He has hardly told
 you, under the head of Toleration in reli-
 gion, "that a regard to the natural liber-
 "ties of mankind restrain the Magistrate
 "from acting *offensively*," before you are
 wholesomely admonished, "that a regard
 "to the welfare of society forbids him to
 "sit still ‡.

WHILE he holds before you the Good
 of society as the grand object of the Ma-

* *Essay*, p. 17.

† *Ibid*, p. 18.

‡ *Ibid*. p. 19.

gistrate's care, you are tempted to grant him this Position as not very unreasonable, viz. " that the Magistrate may discourage " that Religion whose principles are of a " pernicious tendency *, and that He is " bound to make a distinction among Re- " ligions so as to suppress those which are " hurtful to society †." But you will wish to retract the concession, if you love liberty and understand toleration, when you hear him insist upon it, that " this implies a right " in the Magistrate, to judge of the prin- " ciples of Religion as well as of their ef- " fects ‡."

WELL, but perhaps you may, in candour, allow him even this, if in return he will allow you to interpret it in some consistence with your sentiments on Freedom in

* *Essay*, p. 18.

† *Ibid*, p. 19.

‡ *Ibid*.

religion, viz. that, " as an Individual, the
 " Magistrate has a right in common with
 " all others of judging for *himself* in mat-
 " ters of Religion ; but that he is not to
 " carry his Religious opinions into his *Pub-*
 " *lic* character *."—But to this he replies,
 that " the Magistrate is authorized and
 " chosen for this very purpose of exer-
 " cising his Private judgement for the
 " Public good ; and that, when He enters
 " upon this office, He is not to leave his
 " Religion behind him, which would be
 " to leave behind him all his principles of
 " sound judgement †." Should you ob-
 ject to this, as he conjectures it will be
 objected, that " this power of Public judge-
 " ment was given the Magistrate only for
 " the preservation and improvement of
 " *Civil society* and has no relation to *Reli-*
 " *gion*, in which every man must judge

* *Essay*, p. 20.

† *Ibid.*

“ for *himself*,” he replies again to this effect, “ that, the preservation and improvement of Civil society depending on Religion, a commission to exercise his judgement for the attainment of *these* ends, is a commission to exercise it in *Religion*, so far as the attainment of these ends depends on Religion *.” If you would know *how far* these depend on Religion, that you may know how far the Magistrate’s judicial commission in Religion extends, you must remember what he has told you, *viz.* “ that Religion is *every where* a principle of action † — and has *unavoidably* an influence on Civil society ‡.”

THUS you are given to understand, that, though the Civil magistrate should not per-

* *Essay*, p. 21.

† *Ibid*, p. 15.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 18.

secute *any* Religion, yet, He is not to *fit* *still*, an unconcerned spectator of the operations of Religion ; that it is his duty to discourage that Religion whose principles are of a *pernicious tendency* ; and He is to judge of the principles of Religion and their effects, and that, not only as an *Individual*, but in his *Public* character.

INCONSISTENT and confused enough, this account, of the Civil magistrate's power and authority in Religion, must appear without doubt : But perhaps you may think thus much may be gathered clearly enough from the account, *viz.* that the Essayist is at least an advocate for the rights of Civil magistracy, and so far a friend to Religious liberty, which has been hitherto found incompatible with the *independence* of the Church on Civil power — But out-run not his caution for the Rights of the Church. He would be thought a Friend to the Civil magistrate, but then the Civil
magistrate

magistrate must befriend the Church to the extent of her own wish. He justifies the Christian magistrate in chusing, among the interfering and contending Sects of Christianity, his religion for himself *. But then; when he hath determined what sect of Christians to join withal, He must not take the lead of Church-men. They, not He, nor any of his Lay subjects, are to set on foot all the effectual methods of public instruction; Christianity having set apart an Order of men and dedicated them to

* *Essay*, p. 22. And yet, our author has expressed himself something ambiguously on this head. "He is to chuse for himself, says he, amongst interfering and contending professions of Religion, that which shall *appear* to be best." This is clearly enough expressed. Of various Religions the Magistrate may chuse that which *appears* to be best. But, in speaking of the different Sects of Christians, he seems to leave the Magistrate not so much at liberty. It is not *now* said, that, amongst the interfering and contending sects of Christianity, the Magistrate is to chuse for himself that which shall *appear* to be best, but, "*He is bound to chuse the best.*"

this

this very purpose. What they do the magistrate must confirm; and enforce the observation of all their Regulations and Institutions by his own authority: And, to give them the greater strength and permanency, must incorporate them with his Civil constitution.

By this time, my Readers may think with me, that this account of the duty of the Magistrate, with respect to the exertion of his authority in Religion and in favour of the Church established, is extremely confused and inconsistent: Or, if they think not so, but that they discern something of Consistency in it, I doubt they will think, that they discern something far worse than Inconsistency in our Essayist's Principles of reasoning.

AND now; What are we to think of this Essay on Establishments in religion as an Answer to *The Confessional*, and as a Defence
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of Our church? — For, in this light our author would have it considered*. For my own part, I stand amazed at the Indiscretion of the writer in putting the defence of the Church of *England* on such an issue. He has undertaken to vindicate Religious establishments in general, to demonstrate their utility and expediency, and therein to defend Our establishment in particular. — Preposterous method of defence, in my opinion! — But, however that be, could not this have been attempted without one word of *The Confessional*? — Must it be thought essentially necessary for the security of Our foundations to combat the *worthy* † author of that Book? — Or

* *Essay*, p. 49.

† Left this should be thought to proceed from partiality, it may be proper here to declare, that I neither know *who* is the author of *The Confessional*, nor have any personal acquaintance with the *reputed* author. — In using, therefore, this Epithet, I speak but the acknowledgement of the Essayist. For which, see

is that the only Quarter from whence we can apprehend danger to them? — Has Deism then ceased all attempts against our Holy religion? — Or doth Popery abate of her malignant influence, and in her malicious efforts? — Was there not an Infidel or a Papist to oppose, that our Essayist should bend his force against a Christian and a Protestant writer? — Or were their Principles thought not so *fundamentally* fa-

Essay, p. 48. — And, on this acknowledgement from the Essayist of the *worthiness* of the writer of *The Confessional*, it will not be improper to remind him of an observation of *his own* making: “ That, if there be
 “ *starving* as well as *burning*, there are likewise writ-
 “ *ing* inquisitions.” And let him remember, that,
 “ he who can prevail upon himself to act the Executi-
 “ oner in the lowest of these offices” [against a *worthy*
 author and a protestant] “ seems not ill qualified for
 “ advancement to an higher — The hand which can
 “ use its pen to deal out invective for the sake of opi-
 “ nions, would, in a proper situation, brandish it
 “ with no less alacrity in preparing against them its
 “ anathemas.” *Essay*, p. 130, 131.

What Atmosphere hath THIS Writer breathed?

tal

tal to the Church of *England*, that he should meditate her defence against those which have flowed from the pen of a confessed Friend to truth and liberty*?

INDEED, Sir! this was not prudently done. How much more wisely for the Church, and more honourably for yourself, would you have been employed in watching for her safety, with a NEVE and a RIDLEY, against the real, avowed enemies to Our establishment! See where *they* thought that danger might arise to Our happy constitution; and what sort of writers seemed to claim their attention! Would *these* Gentlemen, does this writer think, have considered the author of *The Confessional* either in the light of a determined enemy to Our

* “ *The Confessional* abounds with spirit, and contains many just observations, placed in a striking light, and breathes at the same time a zeal for truth and liberty.” *Essay*, p. 46.

constitution, or as unthinkingly throwing out principles destructive thereto?—Would their Candour have allowed them, or would they in Prudence have chosen to represent him, as this writer has done, as “always holding up to view one professed and obvious purpose, while a much deeper design might be discovered by an attentive eye? *”—Would they have gone about, like our Essayist, to sift *The Confessional* for the invidious purpose of exposing its author, as One, who bears “a strong dislike of Our whole constitution,” as One, who “denies that religion comes, in any respect, under the notice of the Civil magistrate;” and, in a word, as One who “strikes at the root of Our religious establishment, and at the root of all order in religion†?”—I am persuaded those Gentlemen would not. But this our Essayist has done. This deep de-

* *Essay*, p. 47.

† *Ibid.* p. 48.

sign against Our religious establishment, lying under another purpose *professed* in *The Confessional*, he pretends to have detected. *Many* passages, he would persuade us, betray it. *Many* passages are to be met with in *The Confessional*, which not only complain of *some* parts of Our constitution, but which, in his Belief, imply a *strong dislike* of the whole,

THIS severe judgement hath he pronounced, and thought good to proclaim of that celebrated Book and its author; candidly and most consistently, at the same time, professing to have been *willing* to believe just the contrary of the *worthy* author. I wish, for the sake of Religion, and for the credit of Our church in particular, that he *had believed* what he tells us he *was willing* to believe of this *worthy* author. For what must the world think of Our establishment, and on what sort of a Foundation it rests, which is represented to have the

N 2 disapprobation

disapprobation of so staunch a Protestant as the writer of *The Confessional*? — The world will not believe, that so strong a *Dislike* of it can be entertained by One, who appears to be so rational an Enquirer, and whose Book “breathes, at the same time, such a zeal for truth and liberty *,” without too just ground for it. *The Confessional* is a composition which has not appeared to the Public to have been drawn up, either in so much *Haste*, or with so much *Heat*, as to allow them to suppose, that the many passages, which are asserted to imply this *strong dislike*, were but so many *escapes* from the judicious Writer, “object-ions thrown out in the very *Heat* of action, without any certain aim †.”

NOR will the Effect, which our Essay-writer hath represented the learned Work to

* *Essay*, p. 46.

† *Ibid*, p. 48.

have produced upon the Church, as well as upon himself, lead the Public to think the better, or the more honourably of Our establishment. For, could " objections thrown out *without any certain aim,*" formed on no cool and sober reflection, and grounded on no solid argument or undeniable historical fact: Could Objections, I say, of so superficial a nature have had the Effect " to *alarm* the Church " for its very Safety, and to call away its " whole attention to watch over its own " Preservation * ?"—The Church will not be supposed to be thrown into this universal consternation by Objections that had no *real force*.

AND what are the Principles and Opinions, the republication of which gives Her this uneasiness? — They are not such as have merely *escaped* the author of *The Con-*

* *Essay*, p. 135.

Confessional. They are those Opinions; those Principles relative to Establishments and the Legislative authority of the Church, which, it is well known, the learned Doctor CLARKE maintained; which Bishop HOADLEY, and adds the writer of *The Confessional*, before him Saint PAUL, have proved beyond the possibility of an answer. They are the Principles of *these* men, which our Essayist would persuade the World, have not only "*alarmed* and called away " the whole attention of the Church to " watch over *its own* Preservation," but are in themselves repugnant to Our religious establishment. In his apprehension, such Principles leave the Church nothing for her support. Take away from the Church her Legislative authority in matters of *Faith* and *Conscience*, which those two Heroic assertors of Christian liberty and Scripture-authority, backed now by a daring Adjutor, have ventured to disclaim; and you leave Her *naked* and *defenceless*.

" She

" She must," says the affrighted Essayist,
 " give up *all* her Articles and *all* her
 " Creeds. She must give up her *whole*
 " Establishment, divorce Herself from the
 " State, and disclaim its Protection. She
 " must throw down *all* her Bulwarks that
 " have been raised around Her. — In a
 " word, her *whole* Structure must be de-
 " molished to the very foundations, and
 " no Memorial remain, nor *one stone be*
 " *left upon another* to tell posterity where
 " *once the Church of England stood* *."

PITEOUS case truly! — But, while the
 Prophet, in this sad strain of lamentation,
 weeps over the *falling Structure*, what are
 we to think of the *materials* which com-
 pose it, or what of the *foundation* on
 which they have been raised? — Will they
 be thought worth preserving which a
 CLARKE and a HOADLEY, as well as

* *Essay*, p. 135.

the learned and deep-read author of *The Confessional*, are represented to have contemplated with so much disgust and dissatisfaction, when viewed in the mirror (they ever consulted and appealed to) of *Holy scripture*.

THE natural effect of such a representation of the Principles of these great men, as if they were opposite to the Church of *England*, is to raise a jealousy of its Establishment, to render it suspicious in its Foundation; and, while its *improvement only* should be in view, to call away the attention of many of its own members to its *disorders* only, and make them wish the total overthrow of a Constitution, which fears, its very Safety being concerned, to admit the Principles of those undoubted friends to Truth, Liberty, Christianity, and Protestantism. Highly *unseasonable*, therefore, it was for the author to proclaim aloud his own Fears, and much more to tell the
World

World that the Church is *alarmed* at its own danger from the revival of such Principles.

BUT who, the author may think, that loved the Church, could stand unmoved? — or why dissemble our fears in so perilous a time? — The Danger was instant. “ The Battery levelled against Our foundations was powerful;” unsilenced too by *former* attempts. “ It seemed a *duty*, “ therefore, to endeavour to silence it *.” — Good man! — We are all of us to use our best endeavours, no doubt, in the discharge of our *duties*; and Gratitude, mayhap, might forbid the author to consider his Duty to *the Church* among the least. But then, the Church would have us *prudent* in the management of her Cause, as well as affectionate and dutiful in asserting it. And She will hardly think her defence under-

* *Essay*, p. 49.

taken and conducted “ on the principles of
 “ plain sense and common prudence *,”
 by a man who has represented her as trem-
 bling on her foundations under the stric-
 tures of a Protestant writer and a Worthy
 advocate, himself being judge, for the cause
 of Truth and Liberty. Is not this the readiest
 way he could have taken to bring con-
 tempt upon the Church of *England*, and to
 inspire the belief, that her Guardians are
 thus shuddering under an apprehension of
 danger to some *other* part than her *protestant*
 foundations.

BUT are there really “ many passages
 “ in *The Confessional*, which imply a *dislike*
 “ in the writer, of Our whole constitution,
 “ and which strike at the *Root* itself of Our

* “ For this end,” says he [*viz.* to silence the
 battery against our foundations] “ I have attempted to
 “ shew, on the principles of *plain sense* and *common*
 “ *prudence*, the use and necessity of Establishments in
 “ Religion.” *Essay*, p. 49.

“ religious

“ religious establishment ?” — They must imply his *dislike*, and must strike at the root of *Protestantism* itself. For our Essayist must be told, that, whatever defects have been remarked in the Superstructure, the Church of *England* has *Protestantism* for her Foundation. How then was the author of *The Confessional* to be confuted ? — Not by a flowery Essay on the nature of Religious establishments in general ; nor by such a Draught of one, as would incorporate and ally much better with a Popish than a Protestant state ; but by shewing the utility and expediency of Our establishment in particular, as founded in Protestant principles, by shewing the evil tendency and malignant nature of those Popish and Persecuting principles which it opposeth ; and by shewing and proving, that the Principles which the author of *The Confessional* avows, in the *many* passages complained of, are of *that* Complexion : For, if they are not, they need to give us no Uneasiness on

account of *Our foundations*. This should have been attempted by One, who essayed to defend *Our foundations* against Principles subversive of them, and “ to silence “ the powerful Battery which was levelled “ against them, whether with *intention* or “ not,” yet most certainly, according to our author, under a *strong Dislike* thereof.

BUT the truth is, the Essayist has undertaken the Defence of *Our foundations* against a writer who has not attacked them; a Writer, whose Caution, in the strictures he sometimes thinks proper to intersperse among his arguments and striking narratives of fact, will perhaps be found equal to his confessed abilities and uncommon spirit in maintaining the cause of Protestantism. So far is that Writer from having shewn, as he hath been represented, a *strong dislike of our whole constitution* and levelled a powerful Battery *against Our foundations*, that the very enquiry he hath resumed,

resumed, *viz.* how far Protestant churches in setting forth Systematical confessions of faith, and requiring Subscription to Articles of religion which may not *only concern the confession of the true Christian faith and doctrine*, act consistently with their Original principles: I say, the resumption of this Enquiry and his method of conducting it, is a plain proof, that he hath a *strong liking* of the *Foundations* of Our church, whatever *else* he may dislike in it. He would not otherwise have appealed, as he constantly doth, for the truth of the sentiments contained in the *Confessional*, to the Original principles of Reformation.

THE powerful Battery, therefore, which terrifies our Essayist, is erected on that very Foundation which he fancies it points against. And the mischief to be apprehended to Our foundations is what may come from the Silencing battery erected on *opposite* Ground. For, though I can well believe,

believe, that this Essay was intended only for the purpose which the author of it professeth, *viz.* as a *Silencer*; yet even such an Effect cannot well obtain, but the Enemies to our Protestant establishment will be more gratified thereby, than its real and discerning Friends. As these cannot, without an honest indignation, contemplate all attempts to *stifle* the cause of Truth and Religious liberty; so neither will they be able to congratulate our Essayist on the ardent hopes, himself may entertain, of effecting his ungenerous, unmanly purpose; which would open too the pleasing prospect to our enemies, of pursuing their designs against us, without farther Molestation from so able an Advocate for the profession of pure, unmixed, genuine Christianity, as the author of the *Confessional*.

BUT, once more let me ask; What can we think of this Essay and the strictures
tagged

tagged to it, as a Defence of the Church of *England*, in which the author (not a Clergyman I am *willing* * to hope) has ventured to express his dissent from *two* of her Thirty-nine articles. Our church, rightly judging, in my opinion, that the Principle must be *false*, however plausible it may be made to appear, on which the Popish doctrine of merit and its consequences are evidently and certainly founded, has thus declared her judgement of the doctrine of *Free will* in her Tenth article — *The condition of man, after the fall of ADAM is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon GOD. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to GOD without the grace of GOD by CHRIST preventing us that we*

* For the full amount of this hope see above, page 91.

may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.*

THIS ascription of all our good works and holy desires and purposes to the grace of GOD *wholly* and not to any power of *Free will* (which by the bye is an absurd term †) is certainly agreeable to the Word of GOD. It effectually overthrows the Popish doctrine of *Merit* and every doctrine that hath been consequent thereon. And, if we acknowledge not the justness of this ascription of Our church; if, to avoid some seemingly harsh conclusion, we are shy to ascribe *all* our good Works, Faith and even Good will itself *wholly* to the Grace of GOD, but admit them to pro-

* Compare with this the seventeenth Article, and with both, the *Essay*, which contains many passages (particularly p. 118, 119.) implying a *strong dislike* of them both.

† Mr. LOCKE says, I think, that it is as absurd to talk of *Free will*, as of *Square* virtue, or *Swift* sleep.

ceed

ceed in *any degree* from some Independent principle in ourselves; we do so far grant to the Papist his doctrine of *Merit* and all the absurd notions and shocking impieties which that doctrine involves in it.

BUT what says our venturous Essayist on this determination of Our church, respecting the Freedom of the will? — “ If
“ to maintain the freedom of the will,”
says he, “ be Popery, then I will be bold
“ to assert, that both reason and scripture
“ are so far Popish *.”

I WILL leave the Reader to make his own reflection upon this confident assertion, this LAUDEAN principle, this precious piece of *Arminianism* †, as contrasted

* *Essay*, p. 118.

† “ From the beginning of CHARLES I.” says a sensible writer, “ the Pulpit took up a new Scheme, “ under the particular influence of Abp. LAUD. “ A Scheme so entirely new, that it was remonstrated
P with

with the Tenth article above recited ; and upon the decency and propriety of it as coming from a professed Defender of the Church of *England*. — A Remark of a more *general* nature shall conclude the Whole.

THE Church of *England* is subject to the KING, as SUPREME HEAD thereof. All her Laws, relating to the methods of Public instruction, and all her Institutions, as they must have the Sanction of the Parliament of *England* to make them binding upon the Clergy, so they are subject to the same authority for Inspection, Regulation, and Reformation. By that authority She hath been rested on a Protestant foundation, being suffered to require nothing to

“against by the Parliament, as contrary to the Articles, and as what had a tendency to carry back the nation into Popery.” *Seagrave's True protestant*, p. 25.

be

be believed by any Christian man, that is not contained in the *Word of God*, and may not be proved *thereby*. The Wisdom of Parliament has empowered Our Ecclesiastical rulers to receive the Subscriptions of the Clergy to all the Articles of religion, which *only concern the confession of the True Christian Faith, and the Doctrine of the Sacraments* *.

* “ The Statute, 13 *Eliz.* c. 12, enjoins Subscription to all the articles of religion which *only concern the confession of the true Christian faith, and the doctrine of the sacraments*, comprized in a book imprinted, intituled, “ *Articles,*” &c. as in the title of our present Articles. This Bill had passed the House of Commons five years before, namely, 8 *Eliz.* and was rejected by the Lords; and being now resumed in 1571, some members of the House of Commons, and among the rest Sir PETER WENTWORTH, were sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury [PARKER], for the Articles which then [*viz.* 1571.] passed the House. The Archbishop took that occasion to expostulate with the members who were sent to him, *Why they did put*

BUT, in our Essayist's Plan of Ecclesiastical legislation, Principles are laid down

“ out of the book the articles for the homilies, consecrating of bishops, and such like? [meaning, by the limiting clause, confining subscription to articles only of a certain tenour] Surely, Sir, said WENTWORTH, because we were so occupied in other matters, that we had no time to examine them how they agreed with the word of GOD. What! said the Archbishop, surely you mistook the matter; you will refer yourselves wholly to us therein. Sir PETER replied, No, by the faith I bear to GOD, we will pass nothing before we understand what it is; for that were but to make you Popes: make you Popes who list; for we will make you none.” *Journal of Parliament, by Sir Simonds D'Ewes, p. 239.*

“ From this conversation it appears,” says the author of *The Confessional*, “ that no other Act having repealed this Act [the Act with the limiting clause] or in any wise contravened it, touching Subscription to the Articles of Religion, and the Act of Uniformity in particular, 14 Car. II. having referred to it, as the *standing Law*, concerning Subscription to the
directly

directly opposite to the fundamentals of Our establishment. In it a Divine right is appropriated to Ecclesiastics to frame Laws and make Regulations relating to Public instruction *independently* on the State. On *Their* authority alone, not only Creeds, but Larger schemes and systems of faith and doctrine are to be set forth and bound upon the Clergy, and the Supreme magistrate is bound in duty to *enforce* the observation of the engagements *They* may think proper to require of the Clergy for the security of what is called *The Church*. And are we to form our judgement of the Church of *England* from such sentiments as these on the nature of Establishments in Religion? — Surely not. By exhibiting them, however, in her Defence, our Essayist must be considered

“ Articles of Religion, the limiting clause is in full
 “ force to this hour,” *Confessional*, pref. to 2d Edit,
 “ page 11, 12.

as applying them to Her. It seemed highly seasonable, therefore, to contrast them with the above View of Our foundations, which, as it is the true one, so it must appear, in the eye of every true Church-of-*England*-man, a more honourable one than that which hath been examined, and may serve, seasonably enough, as a Land-mark to future Essayists in their defences of ESTABLISHMENTS in RELIGION.



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THE HISTORY OF THE

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FROM 1776 TO 1876

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